Geography and World Cultures offers a tightly focused and scaffolded curriculum that enables students to explore how geographic features, human relationships, political and social structures, economics, science and technology, and the arts have developed and influenced life in countries around the world. Along the way, students are given rigorous instruction on how to read maps, charts, and graphs, and how to create them.

Geography and World Cultures is built to state standards and informed by standards from the National Council for History Education, the National Center for History in the Schools, and the National Council for Social Studies.

Geography and World Cultures is designed as the first course in the social studies sequence. It develops note-taking skills, teaches the basic elements of analytic writing, and introduces students to the close examination of primary documents.

Length: One semester

UNIT 1: INTRODUCTION TO GEOGRAPHY

LESSON 1: WRITING ABOUT THE WORLD

Study: The World Through Space
Discover that geography is an art, a science, and a way of thinking about the world.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Discuss: Introduce Yourself
Introduce yourself to your classmates.
Duration: 0 hrs 15 mins Scoring: 10 points

Journal: Your Notebook
Begin writing your geographer's notebook.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins Scoring: 20 points

Study: A Rapidly Changing Discipline
Discover how information technology is changing the discipline of geography.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Study: The Words We Write With
Learn the words that you will use when writing about the world.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Quiz: Writing about the World
Take a quiz to assess your understanding of the material.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins Scoring: 15 points

LESSON 2: SPATIAL THINKING

Study: Mental Maps
Start thinking in spatial terms.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Study: Defining Culture
Identify the basic elements of culture and cultural studies.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Study: Population and Demography
Learn how to measure and analyze populations.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins
Quiz: Spatial Thinking
Take a quiz to assess your understanding of the material.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins Scoring: 15 points

LESSON 3: THE MAP CASE

Study: Pictures of the World
Discover why maps are special pictures of the world.
Duration: 0 hrs 45 mins

Study: Cartographer's Studio
Learn about the people who make maps.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Read: The Mapmakers
Read about the people who made the maps that revised the world.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Study: Maps and Map Bias
Learn how maps are inherently biased and how each map shows a particular perspective on the world.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Study: GIS: Geographic Information Systems
Learn about the technology that is changing the discipline of geography.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Quiz: The Map Case
Take a quiz to assess your understanding of the material.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins Scoring: 15 points

LESSON 4: FIVE THEMES

Study: Location: Where Is It?
Discover how knowledge of absolute and relative location is a key geographic skill.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Study: Place: What Is It Like?
Examine the physical and human characteristics of a location.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Study: Region: Dividing up the Earth
Learn how to identify distinct areas.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Study: Movement: People in Motion
Discover how population movements affect places, locations, and regions.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Read: Migration Songs
Read and evaluate songs about migrations and movement.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Study: Human-Environmental Interaction
Explore the ways in which humans and the environment affect each other.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Practice: Using the Themes
Pick a country from the CIA World Factbook and use the five themes to summarize it.
Duration: 0 hrs 50 mins Scoring: 25 points

Quiz: Five Themes
LESSON 5: INTRODUCTION TO GEOGRAPHY WRAP-UP

Review: Introduction to Geography
Prepare for the unit test by reviewing key concepts and skills.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Test (CS): Introduction to Geography
Take a computer-scored test to assess what you have learned in this unit.
Duration: 0 hrs 40 mins Scoring: 40 points

Test (TS): Introduction to Geography
Take a teacher-scored test to assess what you have learned in this unit.
Duration: 0 hrs 40 mins Scoring: 60 points

UNIT 2: PHYSICAL ELEMENTS

LESSON 1: THE ROCK BENEATH

Study: Structure of the Earth
Identify the structure and function of each layer of Earth.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Study: Shapes and Forms
Discover the different shapes that form Earth's surface.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Study: A Moving Earth
Learn how movement in the Earth affects the lands we live on.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Study: The Ring of Fire
Discover why the Ring of Fire around the Pacific Ocean has more volcanoes and earthquakes than anywhere else on Earth.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Discuss: Living on Fire
Decide whether you would choose to live on the Ring of Fire.
Duration: 0 hrs 15 mins Scoring: 10 points

Quiz: The Rock Beneath
Take a quiz to assess your understanding of the material.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins Scoring: 15 points

LESSON 2: WATER FLOWS

Study: Rain, Rivers, Oceans, Rain
Learn how the water cycle connects oceans, rain, and everything in between. Did you know that you drink seawater?
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Study: Wearing Away
Learn about the forces that wear away the surface of the Earth.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Journal: Building Up and Wearing Down
Evaluate which is more powerful — land-building or erosion.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins Scoring: 20 points

Study: Civilizations and Rivers
Discover why early civilizations formed in river valleys.
Read: The Folklore of Water
Read myths from ancient civilizations to see what water meant to them.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Study: Water Availability
Learn how cultures adapt to situations in which there is little water.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Quiz: Water Flows
Take a quiz to assess your understanding of the material.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins Scoring: 15 points

LESSON 3: WIND AND WEATHER
Study: The Elements of Weather
Develop your vocabulary and understanding of weather.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Study: Climate Zones
Identify the major climate zones. Which one has grass growing over ice?
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Study: Hurricane Zone
Explain the causes and effects of a hurricane, including the effect of a hurricane on the shape of the land.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Study: Climate Change
Describe current scientific opinion on global climate change.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Quiz: Wind and Weather
Take a quiz to assess your understanding of the material.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins Scoring: 15 points

LESSON 4: THE FIRE OF LIFE
Study: Habitats, Ecosystems, and Biomes
Discover the links that connect life.
Duration: 0 hrs 40 mins

Practice: Life and Land
Write a short essay explaining the connection between geography, climate, and biomes.
Duration: 0 hrs 50 mins Scoring: 25 points

Study: Environment and Culture
Examine some of the ways that ecosystems affect culture.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Study: Fragile Places: Human Interactions with the Environment
Explore the ways in which humans affect the environment, especially in the most fragile places.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Quiz: The Fire of Life
Take a quiz to assess your understanding of the material.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins Scoring: 15 points

LESSON 5: PHYSICAL ELEMENTS WRAP-UP
Review: Physical Elements
Prepare for the unit test by reviewing key concepts and skills.
UNIT 3: CULTURE

LESSON 1: DEMOGRAPHICS

Study: Demography
Study the distribution of the human population on Earth.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Study: Distribution Maps
Learn how to use maps to indicate the way people or cultural traits are distributed through space.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Practice: Indonesia and Germany
Use demographic information to compare two societies.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Study: Population Growth
Describe the growth of the world's population.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Study: Population Movement
Examine the movement of groups of people, especially through urbanization and mass migration.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Quiz: Demographics
Take a quiz to assess your understanding of the material.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins Scoring: 15 points

LESSON 2: POLITICS

Study: The Political Map
Learn how to read a political map.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Read: Revolution and Change
View art, music, stories, and poems created out of the yearning for change.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Study: Governments
Explore the different forms of government around the world.
Duration: 0 hrs 45 mins

Study: Tribes and Nations
Analyze the tension between ethnic ties and national governments.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Quiz: Politics
Take a quiz to assess your understanding of the material.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins Scoring: 15 points

LESSON 3: ECONOMICS

Study: Economic Systems
Learn about command market and traditional economic systems.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Discuss: Is It Fair?
Evaluate world trade and world economic inequality.
Duration: 0 hrs 15 mins Scoring: 10 points

Study: Development
Examine economic development and its unexpected consequences.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Study: Comparing Developed and Undeveloped Countries
Analyze the gaps between developed and undeveloped countries.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Study: The Green Revolution
Discover the agricultural revolution that increased human population while lowering agricultural biodiversity.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Quiz: Economics
Take a quiz to assess your understanding of the material.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins Scoring: 15 points

LESSON 4: DAILY LIFE

Study: Tools for Understanding Others
Learn how to interpret other people and other cultures.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Study: Family Structures
Examine the various ways that families can be organized.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Journal: Look in the Mirror
Evaluate your own family structure.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins Scoring: 20 points

Study: Religion
Discover different ways of understanding the relationship between humans and the divine and learn how to study that relationship.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Study: Eat, Drink, and Sing
Explore the simple activities that make up daily life.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Quiz: Daily Life
Take a quiz to assess your understanding of the material.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins Scoring: 15 points

LESSON 5: CULTURE WRAP-UP

Review: Culture
Prepare for the unit test by reviewing key concepts and skills.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Test (CS): Culture
Take a computer-scored test to assess what you have learned in this unit.
Duration: 0 hrs 40 mins Scoring: 40 points

Test (TS): Culture
UNIT 4: NORTH AND SOUTH AMERICA

LESSON 1: THE NEW WORLD

Study: Defining North and South America
Identify the place, location, and interconnections of North and South America.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Study: Two Big Rivers
Compare and contrast the Mississippi and the Amazon.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Quiz: The New World
Take a quiz to assess your understanding of the material.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins Scoring: 15 points

LESSON 2: NORTH AMERICA

Study: Overview of North America
Identify the major geographic and cultural features of North America.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Practice: Mapping Your State
Create an annotated map of your state, showing geography, climate, biomes, population, and other information.
Duration: 0 hrs 50 mins Scoring: 25 points

Study: Shaped by Ice
Evaluate the effect of ice ages on modern societies.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Quiz: North America
Take a quiz to assess your understanding of the material.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins Scoring: 15 points

LESSON 3: CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA

Study: Overview of Central and South America
Identify the major geographic and cultural features of Central and South America.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Study: Colonial Linguistic Legacy
Analyze the sometimes surprising ways that language connects cultures across long distances.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Journal: Walking Tour
Imagine that you were walking across South America. Lay out your path and then write a journal entry about one day of travel.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins Scoring: 20 points

Quiz: South America
Take a quiz to assess your understanding of the material.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins Scoring: 15 points

LESSON 4: OCEAN-CENTERED GEOGRAPHY

Study: The Pacific Rim
Examine the Pacific Rim: Do the cities and countries along the coasts have more in common with one another than with their inland neighbors?
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins
Study: Looking at Wet Places
Analyze the ways that ocean-centered geography affects mental maps.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Quiz: Ocean-Centered Geography
Take a quiz to assess your understanding of the material.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins Scoring: 15 points

LESSON 5: NORTH AND SOUTH AMERICA WRAP-UP
Review: North and South America
Prepare for the unit test by reviewing key concepts and skills.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Test (CS): North and South America
Take a computer-scored test to assess what you have learned in this unit.
Duration: 0 hrs 40 mins Scoring: 40 points

Test (TS): North and South America
Take a teacher-scored test to assess what you have learned in this unit.
Duration: 0 hrs 40 mins Scoring: 60 points

UNIT 5: EUROPE AND SOUTHWEST ASIA

LESSON 1: THE WEST END OF ASIA

Study: Defining Europe and Southwest Asia
Identify the place, location, and interconnections of Europe and Southwest Asia.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Study: The Mediterranean
Explore the Mediterranean, a small ocean with its own distinct culture.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Quiz: The West End of Asia
Take a quiz to assess your understanding of the material.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins Scoring: 15 points

LESSON 2: EUROPE

Study: Overview of Europe
Identify the major geographic and cultural features of Europe.
Duration: 0 hrs 40 mins

Discuss: The Best That Has Ever Been Written or Done
Respond to Matthew Arnold's definition of culture, which says "the best that has ever been written, thought, or heard."
Duration: 0 hrs 15 mins Scoring: 10 points

Study: Industrialization
Analyze the Industrial Revolution that began in Europe and quickly spread across the entire world.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Quiz: Europe
Take a quiz to assess your understanding of the material.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins Scoring: 15 points

LESSON 3: CENTRAL AND SOUTHWEST ASIA

Study: Overview of Central and Southwest Asia
Identify the major geographic and cultural features of Southwest Asia.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Study: Semitic Religion
Discover the connections between Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.
Duration: 0 hrs 45 mins

**Practice: Sunni and Shia**
Compare the two major types of Islam.
Duration: 0 hrs 50 mins Scoring: 25 points

**Quiz: Central and Southwest Asia**
Take a quiz to assess your understanding of the material.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins Scoring: 15 points

**LESSON 4: ENERGY**

**Study: Fueling the Industrial Economy**
Learn how geographic concentrations of oil and other energy sources have affected the modern world.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

**Study: Oil Fields**
Analyze the energy sources that fuel economic growth and development.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

**Quiz: Energy**
Take a quiz to assess your understanding of the material.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins Scoring: 15 points

**LESSON 5: EUROPE AND SOUTHWEST ASIA WRAP-UP**

**Review: Europe and Southwest Asia**
Prepare for the unit test by reviewing key concepts and skills.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

**Test (CS): Europe and Southwest Asia**
Take a computer-scored test to assess what you have learned in this unit.
Duration: 0 hrs 40 mins Scoring: 40 points

**Test (TS): Europe and Southwest Asia**
Take a teacher-scored test to assess what you have learned in this unit.
Duration: 0 hrs 40 mins Scoring: 60 points

**UNIT 6: EAST ASIA AND SOUTH ASIA**

**LESSON 1: ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS**

**Study: Defining East Asia and South Asia**
Identify the place, location, and interconnections of East Asia and South Asia.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

**Study: The Footprint of the Himalayas**
Trace the effect of the Himalayas on the climate and cultures of South Asia.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

**Quiz: Ancient Civilizations**
Take a quiz to assess your understanding of the material.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins Scoring: 15 points

**LESSON 2: EAST ASIA**

**Study: Overview of East Asia**
Identify the major geographic and cultural features of South Asia.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

**Journal: The One-Child Policy**
Evaluate China's strict birth-control policy.
LESSON 3: SOUTH ASIA

Study: Overview of South Asia
Identify the major geographic and cultural features of East Asia.
Duration: 0 hrs 45 mins

Study: Hinduism
Discover Hinduism, one of the major world religions.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Quiz: South Asia
Take a quiz to assess your understanding of the material.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins Scoring: 15 points

LESSON 4: URBANIZATION

Study: Urbanization in Eastern China
Learn about the rapid growth of cities in eastern China.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Study: Living in Cities
Analyze the factors that lead to urbanization and that affect life in big cities.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Practice: Urban Studies
Use your knowledge of urbanization to examine other large cities.
Duration: 0 hrs 50 mins Scoring: 25 points

Quiz: Urbanization
Take a quiz to assess your understanding of the material.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins Scoring: 15 points

LESSON 5: EAST ASIA AND SOUTH ASIA WRAP-UP

Review: East Asia and South Asia
Prepare for the unit test by reviewing key concepts and skills.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Test (CS): East Asia and South Asia
Take a computer-scored test to assess what you have learned in this unit.
Duration: 0 hrs 40 mins Scoring: 40 points

Test (TS): East Asia and South Asia
Take a teacher-scored test to assess what you have learned in this unit.
Duration: 0 hrs 40 mins Scoring: 60 points

UNIT 7: AFRICA, ANTARCTICA, AND OCEANIA

LESSON 1: PALM TREES AND PENGUINS

Study: Defining Africa and Oceania
Identify the place, location, and interconnections of Africa, Antarctica, and Oceania.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins
Study: Antarctica
Visit Antarctica, which is home to a few scientists and many penguins.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Study: Kilimanjaro
Explore the many meanings of Mount Kilimanjaro.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Quiz: Palm Trees and Penguins
Take a quiz to assess your understanding of the material.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins Scoring: 15 points

LESSON 2: AFRICA
Study: Overview of Africa
Identify the major geographic and cultural features of Africa.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Study: Poverty in Africa
Explore the factors that have led to poverty in Africa.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Practice: Analyzing Multiple Causation
Analyze the factors that have led to poverty in Africa.
Duration: 0 hrs 50 mins Scoring: 25 points

Quiz: Africa
Take a quiz to assess your understanding of the material.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins Scoring: 15 points

LESSON 3: OCEANIA
Study: Overview of Oceania
Identify the major geographic and cultural features of Oceania.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Discuss: Convicts and Aborigines
Discuss the relationship between Aborigines and Australian colonists.
Duration: 0 hrs 15 mins Scoring: 10 points

Study: Ecozones
Use ecozones to analyze life-forms in Oceania and across the world.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Quiz: Oceania
Take a quiz to assess your understanding of the material.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins Scoring: 15 points

LESSON 4: DIVERSITY
Study: A Diverse Continent
Examine the many diversities that shape African geography and culture.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Study: Rules for Living Together
Analyze the rules that societies use to manage diversity and discover what happens when these rules break down.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Quiz: Diversity
Take a quiz to assess your understanding of the material.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins Scoring: 15 points
LESSON 5: AFRICA, ANTARCTICA, AND OCEANIA WRAP-UP

Review: Africa, Antarctica, and Oceania
Prepare for the unit test by reviewing key concepts and skills.
Duration: 0 hrs 30 mins

Test (CS): Africa, Antarctica, and Oceania
Take a computer-scored test to assess what you have learned in this unit.
Duration: 0 hrs 40 mins Scoring: 40 points

Test (TS): Africa, Antarctica, and Oceania
Take a teacher-scored test to assess what you have learned in this unit.
Duration: 0 hrs 40 mins Scoring: 60 points

UNIT 8: REVIEW AND EXAM

LESSON 1: REVIEW AND EXAM

Review: Review
Prepare for the semester exam by reviewing key concepts covered.
Duration: 1 hr

Exam: Semester Exam
Take a computer-scored exam to demonstrate your mastery of concepts and skills covered.
Duration: 0 hrs 50 mins Scoring: 75 points

Final Exam: Semester Exam
Take a teacher-scored exam to demonstrate your mastery of concepts and skills covered.
Duration: 1 hr 40 mins Scoring: 100 points